



A3. Age-Friendly Housing Options

As the baby boom generation ages, the number of seniors at all income levels in our community will grow. This tool looks at ways to provide housing for seniors to “age in place” and to offer seniors housing options with accessibility, affordability, low maintenance, and needed support services while acknowledging that communities that truly meet the needs of the youngest and the oldest, better serve everyone.

Key Issues:

- Over the next five years, the number of age 62+ households in Boulder is projected to increase by 26% (Source: The Highland Group, Inc.).
- In Boulder County between 2010 and 2040, as the baby boom generation ages, the age 65+ population is expected to nearly double, increasing from 1 in 10 to 1 in 4 residents (Source: Colorado State Demographer’s Office).
- Older adults typically live on a fixed income and many cannot readily respond to sharp and unpredictable increases in housing costs.
- By 2020, nationally, [19.1%](#) of those age 65+ are expected to need assistance with one or more activities of daily living.
- The baby boom generation is redefining senior housing. Many are averse to institutional living, desire to be productive longer, are healthier and more active, desire to age in place, demand more amenity and seek community.

Background:

- In Boulder, there are 3,934 age 65+ owner households in single-family homes (2012 ACS 5-yr est.). In a recent survey, almost 75% of older adults in Boulder County reported they had lived in the community for more than 20 years and almost 9 in 10 plan to stay in Boulder County throughout their retirement.
- Very few respondents (13%) to the Boulder County, CO 2014 Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults felt there was excellent or good availability of affordable quality housing and only one-third of respondents gave positive ratings for the variety of housing options. Boulder County rated much lower on these questions than peer communities.
- The Boulder County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is currently conducting focus groups and surveys as part of the update to its [“Age Well Boulder County”](#) Strategic Plan. Participants expressed the need for two levels of assistance with housing: systemic community support—through the provision of a variety of housing options for the county’s aging population—and personal assistance with specific housing needs.
- AARP Definition of Livable Community: *“A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents’ engagement in the community’s civic, economic, and social life.”*
- In 2014, The Joint Center for Housing Studies released a report titled [Housing America’s Older Adults](#). It documents changing demographics, housing preference, financial resources, accessibility and other needs as well as suggested approaches to meeting the housing needs of older Americans.

Implementation Options:

1. Pursue increased occupancy for seniors in low-density residential zones.
2. Explore incentives to include senior housing in future developments or redevelopment projects.
3. Explore partnership to create senior/student mixed-age housing.
4. Explore city role in establishment of naturally occurring retirement communities (NORCs) or “villages”.
5. Identify Age Improvement Districts.
6. Seek strategic assistance from Age-Friendly NYC.
7. Explore creating a one-stop shopping-type office where seniors can get services, permitting and housing questions met.
8. Identify potential sites for future age-restricted housing.
9. Study property tax exemptions for seniors related to the state Homestead Exemption.

Goals Addressed Through this Tool:

Strengthen Our Commitments

Maintain the Middle

✓ **Create Diverse Housing**

Create 15-Minute Neighborhoods

Strengthen Partnerships

✓ **Enable Aging in Place**

“It is time to shift our vantage point about the aging of our nation, focus on our shared destiny, and build on our common concerns.”

*—Sustainable Communities for All
Ages: A Viable Futures Toolkit*